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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Kootenai National Forest
406 293-6211

Forest Supervisor's Office
31374 US Highway 2
Libby, MT 59923-3022

File Code: 2400/1900/5100/1500
Date: January 11, 2012

James B. Martin
Regional Administrator
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, CO 80202

John Progers
303 312 6009

FAX 303 312 7151

Dear Mr. Martin:

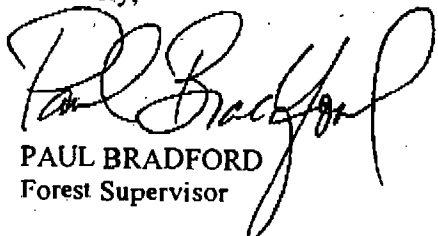
I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and Deputy Regional Administrator Cantor on October 13. As we discussed, there are significant, unique concerns and challenges that we face in the management of National Forest System (NFS) lands in the Libby area, primarily related to the Libby amphibole (LA) asbestos fibers. During the meeting, I spoke about our short-term strategy for fire protection and management, which is primarily dependent on successful initial attack on wildfire starts. I also spoke about the need to develop a strategy that would result in the remediation of all NFS lands where LA is an identified problem.

Recently, the Montana Department of Natural Resources Conservation (DNRC) completed limited testing for the presence of LA on state lands in the Flower Creek drainage south of Libby. Montana DNRC was in the process of implementing a vegetation management project (Upper Flower Timber Sale) when the testing for LA was initiated. It appears that the testing in Flower Creek discovered traces of LA in the soil, duff and tree bark. My understanding of the situation is that the Flower Creek drainage is mostly outside of the EPA operating units and the EPA's National Priority Lands (NPL) boundary.

This discovery of LA in Flower Creek has led to questions regarding the risk associated with management of NFS lands near Libby, but outside of the NPL boundaries. The Kootenai National Forest has several projects in varying stages of planning and implementation outside the Libby Asbestos NPL boundary. Our planned management activities include mechanical manipulation of vegetation, fire suppression, and a variety of other activities.

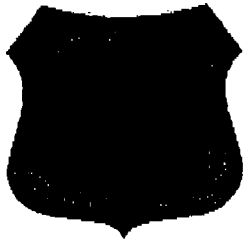
I believe a remediation strategy for LA-affected NFS lands in the Libby area is essential, and would welcome the opportunity to develop this strategy with you. We have mutual interests of ensuring the health and safety for the public, and the Forest Service workforce. Please let me know how we can best move forward with this effort.

Sincerely,


PAUL BRADFORD
Forest Supervisor

cc: Regional Forester, R-1



KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST

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Fax Transmittal Form**To**Name: Christina RogersOrganization: EPA - Denver

Subject: _____

Fax Number: _____

FromName: Malcolm

Date: _____

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303-312 7151**Message:**per phone call